

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS
CENTRAL DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PLAINTIFF

v.

CASE NO. 4:14-CR-00008-BSM-7

JOLENE WATKINS

DEFENDANT

ORDER

Jolene Watkins's motion for compassionate release [Doc. No. 603] is denied because she has not satisfied her burden of showing extraordinary and compelling reasons to justify early release. *See, e.g., United States v. Ram*, 2020 WL 3100837, at *2–3 (E.D. Ark. June 11, 2020).

Watkins pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute more than 500 grams of methamphetamine and was sentenced to 120 months imprisonment. Doc. No. 417. She moves for compassionate early release, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. section 3582(c)(1)(A), which requires consideration of the sentencing factors enumerated by 18 U.S.C. section 3553.

Watkins argues that she qualifies for compassionate release because she has medical conditions that put her health and safety at risk if she contracts COVID-19. Mot. Compassionate Release at 4, 7, Doc. No. 603. Watkins suffers from anemia, asthma, high blood pressure, high BMI, and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, as well as chronic back problems and depression. *Id.* at 7. She attests that FCI Greenville, where she is incarcerated, had approximately 110 confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of September 9, 2020, and argues

that social distancing is virtually impossible for individuals who are imprisoned. *Id.* at 6, 9. Watkins states that she will quarantine at her daughter's home if released, and contends that she is not a danger to society. *Id.* at 10.

The government admits that Watkins has medical conditions that create a higher risk of complications from COVID-19, but opposes her motion because the existence of the virus does not constitute an extraordinary and compelling reason that warrants compassionate release. Resp. Mot. Release at 4, Doc. No. 606. Moreover, based on Watkins's conviction for distributing methamphetamine on behalf of a drug-trafficking organization and her history of daily drug usage, the government contends that Watkins poses a danger to society. *Id.* at 9–10.

IT IS SO ORDERED, this 3rd day of November, 2020.


UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE